

# COUNTER INFORMATION

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## Glasgow: Direct action takes on Labour Councils

*"Parent power has definitely won this battle. Now we have shown what we can do, we plan to carry on", James Gunn, Netherton. The victory of parents and children on May 14th, defending their Primary schools from closure in Glasgow, was due to aggressive campaigning which included sit-ins and illegal demonstrations.*

### No Divide & Rule!

Glasgow schools, including Netherton in Castlemilk, Greenfield in Govan and Whiteinch, were reprieved by embattled Labour Councillors who had originally earmarked 22 schools for closure for financial reasons after Local Government re-organisation. Through the 'Save Our Schools' network, parents of reprieved schools are involved in Sit-ins at St. Bonaventures & Abbotsford in the Gorbals & Levern in Pollok, to get these schools saved too.

With further threats to educational facilities, from the Highlands to Liverpool, likely to intensify in the year ahead, there will be pressures to 'opt out' as four schools have done in Glasgow to postpone closure.

### Self-managed struggle

In Cornwall St, Kinning Park, a 24 hour occupation by user groups of the Neighbourhood Centre started on May 3rd, as officials tried to close the centre down. This attracted support from 'Save Our Schools' campaigners,

Shipyard workers, SNP activists, and anarchists associated with anti-cuts actions in Clydeside. Links have been made with other workers, including librarians threatened with having their shift allowance withdrawn. Labour Councillors in the Govan area have sacrificed 3 neighbourhood centres in a 'divide & rule' trade-off to keep St. Gerard's Secondary open. Split by a bitter Parliamentary selection contest another Labour faction led by MP Mike Watson supports a plan to set up a self-managed centre in Kinning Park. This can only succeed if the sit-in (and others planned in Govan) are successful in preventing closure and land sell-offs.

In Dundee on 30th April, an attempt to occupy Linlathen High (one of 6 selected for closure) was prevented by severe police intimidation, who threatened parents with placing their children 'in care'. In West Dunbartonshire there is coordinated action to overturn planned closures, with action at a Community Resource centre in Blantyre - and at Stanely Centre in Paisley also.

With cuts in services throughout Scotland, the lesson is that only determined action by local people, prepared to disregard the Law, can defend community resources from the callous plans of politicians. To update this info read Justice newsheet, see 'Get involved' p4.

**SOLIDARITY** is needed for the 56 mainly Asian women cleaners at Hillingdon Hospital, on strike for over 6 months against Pall Mall - if in the London area join the daily picket, info 0171 713 7907.

## Strike in the post

IN LATE MAY postal workers were voting on whether to strike country-wide against Royal Mail's "Employee Agenda" proposals.

Royal Mail want to introduce a new team working system, intended to break up posties' collective organisation. Management want increased productivity and a divisive bonus system.

A postie writes "The Employee Agenda is all about increased exploitation of the workforce, only in this case they are hoping to enlist the help of the self same workforce in their own exploitation. This must not be allowed to happen." (Edinburgh and Lothian Workers Liaison Committee leaflet)

Workers' self-organisation, and a willingness to defy both the law and compromising trade union leaders, will be vital if the posties are to win.



11 May : Kinning Park occupiers and kids against cuts at Glasgow City Chambers

## THE WORLD IS OUR PICKET LINE

ON 3 April, a mass meeting of the Liverpool dockers unanimously agreed to abandon all further negotiations with the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, and to aim for an all out international boycott of the Port of Liverpool.

This followed the rejection of a compromise deal by the MHDC, whose arrogant attitude suggests that they've engineered the dispute as part of the casualisation process, preventing the dockers' collective class consciousness being passed on to the younger generation at Torside and Nelson.

Delegations continue to go abroad and many Women of the Waterfront have been on speaking tours. 3,500 meetings have been addressed and over £1M raised. Pickets sent to the American West Coast were inspired by a group of Mexican truckers they'd stopped. Instead of the expected confrontation, the non-unionised drivers simply wanted to know if they could join a union

that sent pickets 6,000 miles. Next day some of them mounted their own 24 hour picket.

International solidarity actions cheer everybody: Liverpool boats have been blacked in Portugal, and in Bilbao, Spain. Swedish syndicalist dockers refused to move empty ACL containers - MHDC's biggest customer. On 11 May 30 supporters occupied the ACL office in Stockholm to demand a boycott of Liverpool.

### UNOFFICIAL STRENGTH

On April 27, 200 attended a meeting in Liverpool to set up a National Co-ordinating Committee of Dockers Support Groups. While the groups seemed to view their role as fund-raisers, most speakers

appeared fixated by the idea that they could organise strike action. Despite notable exceptions, such as AC Delco workers in Kirkby, mass supportive strike actions are an unrealistic expectation. The usual Leftist nonsense of pressurising the union leaders was heard amid demands to make the dispute official.

Although industrial collective organisation may appear alien to many under 30, currently there is a collective struggle being fought against the Job Seekers Allowance, as the state attempts to control the unemployed. Can the 2 struggles become one? Will the participants recognise each other?

Abridged - with thanks - from a longer article from PO Box 37, Liverpool L36 9FZ. See also Subversion.

## Workers Solidarity for a new Ireland.

With the effective ending of the Irish Peace Process by the bombs in London in February - all of which have been claimed by the IRA, an important opportunity has been lost.

The British government failed to meet minimum concerns: there was no release of political prisoners - in fact the conditions for the prisoners held in the UK deteriorated during this time. There was no substantial reduction in the number of troops 'stationed' in the six counties. John Major was more concerned with the survival of his Government than with advancing the peace-process.

As anarchists we welcomed the cease-fire but condemned the Peace Process in the sense that it has never at any time concerned itself with the reality of life that faces working class people in Ireland, both north and south of the border. Unemployment remains high in Ireland, as do levels of poverty and inequality. This disastrous situation has been created and 'managed' by two of the most important players within the Peace Process - the Irish and British Governments.

These social conditions, and the fertile grounds they offer to the politics of sectarianism within Ireland, are the real problems that must be faced. Nationalism doesn't recognise this; it offers no solutions to capitalism. We are working for a new Ireland, an anarchist society where production is to satisfy needs and where control rests in the hands of the working class. The colour of the flag that flies over our heads is not important, but the quality of our lives is. Compared to the possibility of real socialism and real freedom, republicanism is politically bankrupt.

■ abridged from *Workers Solidarity Movement Statement on the end of the IRA Cease-Fire*. Full version, SAE to POB 1528, Dublin 8, Ireland.

## Taking power from the State

After the Dunblane & Port Arthur massacres, immense public pressure has built up on the State to reduce public access to handguns & other weaponry. Even before the Oklahoma massacre last year, President Clinton was gaining at the polls by his efforts to take on the gun-lobby.

Ordinary people are rightly outraged at the access that right-wing fanatics and cranks have to such lethal weapons. With the possible exception of Dunblane, most of the massacres are carried out by white, male supremacists filled with contempt for ordinary people, prepared with their crazed outlook to engage in indiscriminate massacres to advance their aims.

However, it is important to realise that many weapons are 'illegal', not registered, and come from thefts within army bases. The State continues to hold massive amounts of weaponry which it can deploy against the population when it is in their interests to do so. Clinton & other State leaders want to gain credibility by passing a few restrictions on licensed gun holders, while keeping their own huge armed forces from examination. Only through a social revolution can the weapons be taken from the landowners, criminal gangs & the State, along with deranged individuals, whose inhumanity is a mirror image of divided, class-ridden society.

## INSIDE

### FREE SATPAL RAM!

IN Birmingham, November 1986, Satpal Ram was attacked in a Bengali restaurant by 6 white males. Repeatedly stabbed about the head and arms with a broken tumbler, Satpal defended himself with a small knife, stabbing one attacker who refused medical attention and subsequently died. Satpal was charged with murder.

Forty minutes before the trial started, Satpal met this barrister who decided to drop the self-defence plea. The prosecution was based on the attackers' defence and no interpreter for the Bengali defence witnesses was provided. The judge acted as interpreter, but he didn't understand Bengali! The all-white jury found Satpal guilty and he was sentenced to life.

Nine and a half years on and still awaiting an appeal, Satpal is



held in Long Lartin prison where he has been classed as a 'troublemaker' for collecting statements from prisoners protesting the illegal practice of forcing them to squat for internal examinations. Satpal has been held in solitary in a 8 x 7 ft 'strongbox'. He writes, 'I have been denied phone calls to family and solicitor because I refused to squat during a stripsearch. I have been held in the 'strongbox' with no natural light, no furniture, bedding or clothes and no toilet or wash facilities. I have been dragged out unconscious by prison officers and denied

hospital treatment!'

The Free Satpal Campaign is extremely concerned for his safety and is calling for protests to be made to Long Lartin governor Mullin on 01386-830101, Fax: 01386-832-834. Info: FREE SATPAL CAMPAIGN, 101 Villa Rd, Handsworth. 0121-507-1618.

### SELF-DEFENCE NO OFFENCE

IN March, Czech anti-fascist activist Pavel Kroupa was attacked by 5 Nazi skins on a Prague bus. Pavel defended himself and one Nazi died. Pavel Kroupa was charged with murder and jailed.

## Star Wars against the State

Resistance to conscripted military service continues throughout Spain but the greatest 'insurrection' is in the Basque country. Out of 260 in Spain currently imprisoned, 70 are in Bilbao with more basque anti-militarists in Pamplona.

Protesting against the system of first reporting for overnight gaol stays, followed by full imprisonment, anti-militarists



Tribunal de Justicia, in Bilbao, on 12th March. Over 50 from the support group 'Tutti Sustenga Taldea' were present. The chains were cut & one supporter Txema was badly beaten by 6 police. There are 12 in Tutti's cell, 10 of which are military refusals.

A Radio Programme, *La Guerra de las Galaxias* (Star Wars), which Tutti participates in, is broadcast each Tuesday 9.30 - 10.30pm (107

FM). \* c/o Centro Likiniano, Ronda 12, Bilbao. tel Quevedo: 944168528.

## SWEDISH SUBVERSION

Our Stockholm correspondent reports:

DESPISE severe police brutality there was a successful blockade against a particularly horrible clothes chain, H&M, in Stockholm on 8 March to increase awareness of the sexism that H&M, among others, spread in their advertising campaigns.

Blockades, sabotage and spraypainted slogans have hit Shell stations from Umea in the north to Stockholm, in solidarity with the Nigerian people.

A massive road extension project in Stockholm is meeting resistance through sabotage of equipment and squatting land and houses on the route.

Stockholm Anti-Fascist Action report that the past year has seen local demos and attacks on Nazi shops succeed in driving fascist bases out of the Söder area - an inspiring victory.

## INFO

His comrades are asking for benefits and financial support topay for Pavel's defence or he could be jailed for life. Benefit Support: Ivana Vranova, Bohunicka 19, 600 00 Brno, Czech Republic, Tel: 09425-339895 (Ask for Borek)

### JUSTICE FOR MANNING!

JUST hours after telling his mother that he was going to be killed, Alton Manning was found dead in Blakenhurst Prison with extensive injuries on face, head and body. Screws were seen beating him. For 4 years Alton had been complaining of violent harassment from police and screws. A cover-up is in progress, but is being strongly contested.

CONTACT: Birmingham Racial Attacks Monitoring Unit (BRAMU), 339 Dudley Rd, Winsor, Green, Birmingham, B18 4HB Tel: 021-454-9500



## GROUNDSWELL AGAINST Jobseekers Slavery Act

March.

Edinburgh Claimants have a new direct action policy. Officials who harass

claimants or cut their benefit receive 2 warning letters. A third "strike" means the official's photo will be flyposted and a demo mounted in their own offices.

Claimants delivered the first warning letters during an anti-JSA demo on 9 April.

Edinburgh Claimants are also producing publicity against the benefit fraud campaign.

'Persons Unknown'

have emblazoned

MACFARLANE

SNOOPER SCUM

on the head snooper's

Castle Terrace office.

Benefit agency

workers in several

London offices

including Tottenham,

Hilldon and

Southall plus workers

in Leeds and Sheffield

struck over the JSA in April and

May, sometimes to oppose JSA

trials, and also against compulsory

transfers to JSA work. However

another demand has been for "se-

curity screens", a reactionary de-

mand which management could

meet and thereby defuse opposi-

tion to the JSA itself.

With Labour too supporting

workfare, Groundswell declare "We do not expect any solutions



from politicians or bureaucrats... Instead we call on the waged and unwaged everywhere to work together and resist JSA by means of non-co-operation, industrial and direct action."

Groundswell (network of inde-

pendent groups vs JSA), c/o Claimants Action, E. Oxford Commu-

nity Centre, Princes St., Oxford,

01865 723750. Edinburgh Claimants see Get Involved p.4.

### THIS LAND IS OUR LAND

ON 2 April the camps at Tot Hill and Castle fell to the bulldozers at Newbury. 768 arrests have occurred during resistance to the bypass. A new "Diggers" camp has been set up (01635 550552). "THE Land is Ours" seized 13 derelict acres in Wandsworth, London on 5 May. Hundreds are building a sustainable village and permaculture gardens to oppose profit-seeking land-developers Guinness (01865-722016).

AS RAM74 prepares to resist the first works on the M74 extension in Glasgow (424 1797), locals in East Lothian are opposing the planned destruction of 400 oaks at Preßmennan Woods (01368 850630). THOUSANDS of anti nuclear activists ripped up rail track, blocked roads, and clashed with cops in early May to stop atomic waste reaching a storage depot at Gorleben, north Germany.

In Germany, 50,000 mass transit workers, refuse collectors & hospital employees launched 'rolling' strikes from 9th May.

## World to Win



### FREE WATER

LOTHIAN TAP have produced an excellent leaflet detailing how to successfully refuse to pay water charges in Scotland. The aim of non-payment is to make the privatisation of Scotland's water unworkable. Three new quangos are under government orders to maximise private companies involvement in water and sewerage. Lothian Totally against Water Privatisation 0131 229 5912.

★ SHELL - KILLING FOR OIL DEMONSTRATORS besieged the Shell AGM in London 15 May and simultaneously picketed Shell Aberdeen. Shell have caused terrible environmental destruction in Ogoniland and supplied arms to the murderous Nigerian military. "We must link up the struggles of British and Nigerian people as we fight a common enemy," say Peoples Embargo for Democracy in Nigeria (PO Box 256, London SE11 5TH, 0181 202 6292)

★ SOLIDARITY STOPS RIP-OFF NORWICH Solidarity Centre won a victory in their ongoing fight against rip-off employment agencies when Staffing Solutions - supplying cheap labour to veg packers Knights - were forced to stop charging workers for protective clothing. NSC 01603 611072

★ THE McLIBEL TRIAL - in which McDonalds are suing 2 London Greenpeace activists, looks set to last till November '96. International protest is building towards the 16 October World Anti McDonalds Day. McLibel, 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1 9DX. 0171 713 1269. What's Wrong with McDonalds leaflets 0115 958566. McSpotlight Internet site <http://www.McSpotlight.org/>

★ MEET THE NEW BOSS.. Police fired rubber bullets at squatters resisting eviction in Alexandra township, South Africa on 6 May.

★ RESISTANCE BREWING 600,000 SRI LANKAN tea plantation workers went on general strike in late April, fighting for a wage increase and a guaranteed number of days work per year.

★ GROUND THE HAWKS Activists stormed the stage and halted the British Aerospace AGM in London on 1st May, in opposition to the supply of Hawk military aircraft used by the Indonesian regime repressing in East Timor.

★ OVER THE SEA TO SKYE Faced with the highest bridge tolls in Europe, there has been mass refusal to pay the extortionate charges. Miller Homes the owners have been picketed in Edinburgh & demonstrations held at Dingwall Sheriff Court by *Skye & Kyle Against Tolls*. George Anderson the first of 180 being pursued was fined £90 on April 11th and is refusing to pay up. 01450-552-339.

★ MAY DAY TURKS SHOT Two May Day demonstrators in Istanbul were shot dead by police, using 'stop & search' intimidation.

★ PENSIONERS WOUNDED Ten pensioners who barricaded the Prime Minister of the Central African Republic in his office, demanding the payment of back Pension were shot by Police on 3rd May.

# DOING IT FOR OURSELVES

INSPIRED by the strike at JJ Fast Foods and backed by the JJ Strikers and supporters, workers in 4 north London textile factories have recently won unofficial strikes.

On 19 February workers struck at Jenny's Textiles. Flying pickets visited other textile works. The strike was 100% and after one day the boss settled. The workers won Union recognition, written contracts, overtime pay, tea-breaks

and a proper kitchen and toilets.

Workers in another Tottenham textile factory, Eurosene, walked out on 17 April after a worker had been sacked and attacked by the boss. Local factories were leafleted urging other workers to join the picket. New workers recruited by the boss turned away after pickets explained the situation.

On 23 April the boss agreed to take back the dismissed worker,

Below - JJ strikers and supporters



## Landless defy State terror

SINCE 1980, 1357 workers have been killed fighting for land in Brazil. No police or hired thugs recruited by landlords have been charged. In the past year, over 40 rural workers have been murdered, including 20 on 18th April in Para.

*Libera* \* reports that in Corumbiara, "300 military police invaded an area occupied by 550 families opening fire on them. A few attempted to defend themselves - there were 9 'landless' dead, seven of them executed by bullets in the back of the head. Two military police were killed, with 138 landless wounded or beaten up. 200 were tortured, women were raped and 9 'disappeared'." 74 workers were charged with laying a trap for the police"!

**Inequality, Brazilian style**  
Publicity about the massacre has exposed the Government's policies, with 12 million landless throughout Brazil, 80 million hectares lying 'idle' and a Government which only represents the agri-business interests. Movements of landless workers are active promoting further occupations, including Pronto do Paranapanema with 4,000 families.

### Urban unrest

On 28th March, 6,000 secondary school students marched against cuts in Sao Paulo, with demonstrations in outlying towns. In April a national strike of Federal State workers threatened to "transform Brazil into a New France", making reference to last year's radical French strike action.

Also in Sao Paulo, street battles between unemployed and repressive Police left 40 wounded in March. The so-called "Workers Party" (PT) and its trade-union

## DESPERATE TIMES, STRONG MEASURES

The dispossessed of Latin America continue to organise and take direct action in the face of oppression and exploitation.

**Mexico:** Last September, Morelos peasants occupied the small town of Tepoztlan to prevent developers building a golf course and tourism complex there. On 10 April, Police ambushed a convoy of buses carrying peasants to the town of Cuernavaca, where the Mexican President was giving a speech. One peasant was killed and 18 wounded, but the development has been stopped and 6 policemen have been charged with murder and 54 others with abuse of authority.

**Venezuela:** March 1996 saw a series of riots, demos and strikes against State austerity measures.

**Argentina:** An 8 day revolt at Sierra Chica jail ended in early April, with 1,000 prisoners gaining concessions including being moved to jails nearer to relatives, sentences being reduced to take into account time served before trial and guarantees of no reprisals. Prisoners at three other jails in the Buenos Aires Province revolted in solidarity.

apologised for attacking him and agreed that the workers could elect their own union representative.

The final outcome at JJ's itself was disappointing. Boss Kamil flouted the Industrial Tribunal ruling, declaring that there would be no union recognition and that he could make the workers work from 5am till midnight if he required.

The workers walked out again, but the TGWU ordered them to accept Kamil's contract. The Union officials' main aim was union recognition, while the workers' main goal was improved wages and conditions.

"We believe a world without war, without exploitation, without classes, is possible. It is we, the workers, who will create it...Solidarity is the way forward. Workers of the world unite," from JJ worker's speech to Liverpool dockers' rally 2.12.95.

On 18 March, 12 of the original 42 sacked JJ workers returned to work, with full back pay and the right to union organisation - but without the improved conditions. The other 30 workers decided not to return, but all 42 remain committed to the continuing fight at JJ's and elsewhere.

These disputes show what can be achieved when workers ditch the Union bureaucracy, ignore anti-union laws and take struggles into their own hands.

\*Info "The Tottenham Picket", NE London Textile branch TGWU, c/o Unwaged Centre, 72 West Green Rd, London N15 5NS, tel 0181 802 9804.

## GET INVOLVED !

- Scottish anarchist contacts: Justice/Cothrom fortnightly news-sheet, & also Glasgow Anarchists, write c/o Glasgow Solidarity Centre, 3 Royal Exchange Square, Glasgow G1 3PA, Tel: 0141 226 5066; Dundee Anarchists 01382 814922; The Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh/Edinburgh Claimants, c/o Peace & Justice, St. Johns, Princes St., Edinburgh (mail only); • Active Distro, BM Active, London WC1N 3XX • AK Distribution, 33 Tower St, Leith, Edinburgh • Anarchist Black Cross, c/o 121 Raifton Rd, London SE24 (prisoner solidarity) • Anarchist Communist Federation, 848 Whitechapel High St, London E1 7QX • Angry People, PO Box 108, St. Peters, NSW 2044 Australia • Bad Attitude, 121 Raifton Road, London, SE24 Tel 0171-978 9057 • Clash War: PO Box 1021, Edinburgh EH8 9PW; PO Box 772, Bristol BS99 1EL • Collective Action Notes, PO Box 22962, Balto, MD 21203, USA • Contrabflow, 56a Infoshop, 56 Crampton St., London SE17 (excellent news-sheet) • DS4A, Box 8, 82 Colston St, Bristol (district) • Education Worker Network, Sol Fed-IWA, PO Box 29, Manchester, M15 5HW • East Anglia Anarchist Network, PO Box 87, Ipswich IP4 4JQ • Federation Anarchiste, 145 Rue Amelot, 75011 Paris, France • Frontline Collective and Organise both at: PO Box 505, Belfast BT11 9EE, Ireland • Haringey Solidarity Group, Box 2474, London N8, 0181 802 9804 • Industrial Workers of the World, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 1WB • Kate Sharpley Library, BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX • Kaos?, c/o J.Bals, Blekksoppgrinda 39, 1352 Kolsas, Norway • Kommunist Kranti, Majdoor Library, Autopin Jhuggi, Faridabad-121001, India • London Greenpeace, 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1 • Norwich Solidarity Centre/Solidarity Fed.: PO Box 73, Norwich NR3 1QD • SchNEWS, PO Box 2600, Brighton BN2 2DX (weekly news-sheet) 01273 685913 • Sheffield Anarchist Group, PO Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY • Solidarity Fed - IWA, PO Box 493, St. Albans, AL1 5TW • South Bristol Anarchists, PO Box 1076, Bristol, BS99 1WE • Torpedo, Milan Djurić, M. Velikog 12/10 11300 Smederevo, Serbia-Yugoslavia. *Drastic space shortage forced us to delete some listings - please write if you'd like re-instated, or a new listing.*

**COUNTER INFORMATION** is produced by an independent collective, based in central Scotland, including Edinburgh. Our aim for the past 10 years has been to assist in the struggle against all injustice, oppression and exploitation. For info on CI distro and revolutionary activities in the north of England please write to: CI, PO Box HP 171, LEEDS, LS6 1XX. We invite readers to write for CIs to distribute (12,500 printed), send us info on social struggles, make a much-needed donation (cheques to Counter Information). **COUNTER INFORMATION**, c/o Transmission, 28 King St., Glasgow G1 5QP, Scotland-UK. CI 46 went to press 20.5.96.